

Received from Mr Geo. Edward Sears,
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D.R. Jack.

LONGEVITY: A LECTURE

Written and compiled from various sources,

BY G. E. FENETY. ^{very damaged} 1812-1899

FREDERICTON—1887.

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In the whole range of our thoughts, feelings and experiences, there is no subject of more transcendent importance than that which has to do with the length of our lives. As there is nothing more uncertain than life, neither can there be any thing of more absorbing interest, when we think at all—or goes more quickly to the understanding, when we reflect and remember; for there is not a living soul but has at some time or other been called upon to partake of the bitter dregs of human sorrow—in mourning for those who have departed in the dawn, the noon, or the evening of life,—stricken down in infancy, manhood, or old age—shaking our household to its foundation, and embittering our memory with the recollection of endearing associations.

But our object in this paper is not to brood upon the uncertainties and sorrows of life; but to seek comfort in historical facts, and to ask if it is human to live long, as these facts will show, is it unreasonable to expect that any life may be lengthened far beyond the ordinary days which we observe passing over the heads of those who cease to exist at a comparatively early age? As we hold our lives as it were in our own hands, humanly speaking, we are answerable to ourselves in a great measure for their disposal. If our life is used well and is well guarded, it will be healthful and afford us happiness. But if it is ill treated—exposed to adverse vicissitudes, fall into habits of intemperance, whether in eating or drinking, or other excesses, become careless of surroundings and imagine because we are healthy and strong we may indulge freely, defy the elements in inclement seasons, or undertake to go beyond our powers, we must expect to pay the penalty—a broken constitution and premature death—be cut off from the land of the living in the days of our youth.

Then, again, we are exposed to accidents, to epidemics, to plagues and pestilence, to wars, to famines, and such other incidental contingencies as stand in the way of longevity. Climate, wet locality, bad drainage, defective ventilation, sanitary derangements generally, untidy habits, atmospherical disturbances, unwholesome food, are also superinducing causes of premature decay. And yet, with all his experience and sorrow, man seems to be as neglectful of this part of his religion, knowing the consequence too, as that which has to do with his immortal soul. So that the language of the Psalmist is correct, as it takes into account all the conditions of our nature, such as they have been from the beginning, and will likely continue so long as we are neglectful of those things which go to keep our bodies healthy and our moral and religious duties always before us.

"The days of our years are three score years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."

There is so much to be said upon a subject so far reaching as this, that time only will permit a reference to some of the interesting phenomena that have to do with human life in relation to its length, in remarkable individual and well authenticated cases. It seems to me that if all the conditions requisite to longevity were strictly observed, there is no reason why a man should not live one hundred years and more, as to pass away at 70 or 80. Hereditary diseases, accidents, plagues, from whatever causes, &c., must be excepted from this conclusion. Victor Hugo, talking about age, confessed that the most disagreeable advance to him was that from thirty nine to forty. "But," said a friend, "I should take it a great deal better to be forty than fifty." "Not at all," replied Hugo, "forty years is the old age of youth, while fifty years is the youth of old age."

Why is it that the exception of 100 years of age is the rule of life? A generation passes away every 30 or 33 years, while the majority of them should live to a much

riper age. This is a loss to the world, to all fellow men. Man is a productive agent in the highest sense. He is the producer of riches, property, society, etc., and yet one half of his usefulness is not known simply because he dies—half his life is cut off. On the principle of political economy, weakness is a greater waste than sickness. Indecision and incapacity are enemies to society. A man is sick; if he is a considerate man he will do one of two things—get well as fast as possible or—die. The weak do neither; they hang on. It is a wonder men get on as well as they do. They know little or nothing of the rules by which their life and their bodily machinery are upheld. They are generally afraid of the things God made most of—fresh air and cold water. There is scarcely one thoroughly healthy man in a community. People live in close houses, they crowd in close churches, they shut out all the fresh air, and scarcely know that it is injurious. The facts of this are worth thinking over. An ordinary man can consume 4,000 cubic feet of air every hour, and he has a right to that air pure, and should have it pure. Now, does he get it? A late New York paper says:—In the New York hospitals each patient gets 1200 feet per hour of pure air; in the jails the average is about 800; in the schools 800 down to even 25 feet per hour; and these little folks we call our children get twenty five feet of air per hour in school, while if they were thieves and sent to prison they would get 800! In churches, lecture halls and private houses it is just as bad. In an ordinary hall the audience breathe the air in the building, it may be as often as five times—and every time a man breathes anew he is tasting something which was but a short time before inside some other people. The community are not half sensitive enough to foul air. Civilization tends to lengthen life by multiplying comforts, but these have their attendant shadows.

A man is ordinarily said to be young even in this country, says an American writer, where we live preternaturally fast, up to thirty five or forty, to be middle aged from forty to fifty, and not to be positively old, if he be of sound health and well preserved, until he shall have reached sixty or thereabout. This estimate of years would indicate the normal age of man to be one hundred (as Buffon declares it should be), though his average age is scarcely fifty and sixty is much beyond it. What reason is there, then, for speaking of thirty five to forty as young, and forty to fifty as middle-age? None, unless we consider that we begin practical and useful existence, as we really do, with the attainment of our legal majority; and, as a rule, people have very little life—thirty to thirty five years—after that. It is common to speak of men, especially in public positions, of sixty, as in their prime. But then Dominion officials have been superannuated before the age of sixty, while yet in their prime—better fit for business perhaps at that age than if much younger—for age gives men experience and makes them more solid, thoughtful, and perhaps trustful. But then we must not be too particular, while there are others always ready to step in and take their places. A very few appear to be aged at 70, notably in Europe; but they are thought so, since at seventy five the public distrusts them merely from their age. The great majority of men are buried and forgotten before they have gained three-score; and he who is in his prime then, in a seeming sense, is as exceptional as he who lives to ninety or ninety five. We all like to delude ourselves in respect to life. When our neighbour is sixty, he appears to be very old. When we are of that age, we are not young to be sure; but we feel as young, we say, as ever; in fact, we are in our prime. While we can creep around, and are in possession of our faculties, we insist that we are not very old; but our friends, Smith and Brown, with not a year more than we, if the truth were known, make themselves ridiculous by trying to appear young. At the age of sixty some men are quite old, while others at ninety appear like sixty. It depends altogether, provided the health and constitution remain unimpaired, how a man carries himself. If he broods over his declining days, and thinks that because he has

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attained the age of sixty or seventy, he should retire to the chimney corner and take no more interest in what is going on in the world, or immediately about him, that man is dying of old age. If, on the other hand, he bears himself up, and at sixty feels that he has the same capacity for work he ever had—that while he has all his faculties about him, and considers himself equal to all the demands made upon his time, and that old age with him is in the distant future—that man will continue young in spite of his years.

It was Professor Hufeland's opinion that the limit of possible human life might be set at 200 years; and this on the general principle that the life of a creature is eight times the years of its period of growth. That which is quickly formed quickly perishes, and the earlier complete development is reached the sooner bodily decay ensues. More women reach old ages than men, but more men attain remarkable longevity than women. Some animals grow to be very old. Horned animals live shorter lives than those without horns, (says the same writer), fierce longer than timid, and amphibious longer than those which inhabit the air. The voracious pike exists, it is said, to an age of 150 years; the turtle is good for 100 years or more; and among birds the golden eagle is known to have lived nearly 200 years, while the sly and sombre crow reaches the venerable age of a century.

M. Solaville says:—Women are more numerous in extreme old age than men, and the difference increases with the age. Thus at 60 years the advantage is with the women in the proportion of 7 per cent., at 90 and above it rises to 45, and with centenarians to 60 per 100. It is in France (says the same writer) that we find the greatest relative number of inhabitants at the age of 60 and upwards; but it is not so for the centenarians, of which France has less than all the other States of Europe except Belgium, Denmark and Switzerland.

A statistician in England, in studying a generation of a million of people from birth to death, finds that one-fourth of them die before they reach five years; less than one-twenty eighth between five and ten years; in the next five years the mortality is lower than at any period; in the next five years an increase, especially among women—the influence of dangerous occupations begins to be seen in the death rate. Eight times as many men as women die violent deaths. This is perceptible for twenty years. Consumption is prevalent, and accounts for one half of the deaths from twenty to forty five. From thirty five to forty five the effects of the wear and tear of the system are seen. At forty five the million is lessened to four hundred and twenty one thousand one hundred and fifteen—death-rate increasing rapidly. About one-sixth of the million is left at seventy five, at eighty five only thirty eight thousand five hundred and sixty five are left, and at one hundred, two hundred and two are left. At fifty three, men and women surviving are about equal in number, and from fifty five onward the women exceed the men.

The decimating effects upon human life is more telling through the agency of war than any other cause. For example: The Crimean war cost the lives of 750,000 men; the Italian war (1859), 45,000; the Schleswig-Holstein war, 3,000; the Prusso-Austrian war (1866), 45,000; the Mexican expedition, 65,000; the Franco-Prussian war, 215,000; the Turko-Russian war, 600,000; total, 1,748,000, and with 800,000 men killed in the American war, 2,548,000. This number does not include deaths from typhus, cholera and other diseases inseparable from war. All this destruction of life happened within a quarter of a century of time.

The report of the Surgeon-General of the United States Army shows how enormous were the casualties during the late revolution.

During the first two years of the war (he says) surgical operations were performed on 187,470 wounded soldiers. * * * During 1861 and 1862 the mortality in the army from disease was more than five times as great as that of men in the same age in civil life,

being 49.7 men per 1000 in 1861, and 65.2 per 1000 in 1862. The total number of deaths from disease alone during the two years was 56,193. In this number those dying while prisoners, or after being discharged for disability, are not included. The number of men constantly sick was about 10 per cent of the strength of the army, and the total number of cases treated, including wounds, was 878,918 during 1861, and 1,711,803 during 1865. The most fatal disease was camp fever, of which 19,459 died during the two years. Of diarrhoea and dysentery 11,560 died, and from inflammation of the respiratory organs there were 8,000 deaths.

I propose now to refer to a number of recorded and well authenticated cases of longevity which I have gathered from various sources. An excellent writer in one of the American Magazines, Eugene Thomson, some ten years ago devoted a long article to the consideration of what he called the "curiosities of longevity." The "Scientific American," published in New York, also furnishes a number of examples of longevity.—"Longman's Magazine" is another source from which I gather materials for grouping together in a condensed form the statistics I now offer.

John Bales, of Northampton, died in 1776 at the age of 126; an inscription on the tomb of Margaret Scott, at Dalkeith, Scotland, showed that she completed a century and a quarter of years—the same age as John Tice, of Worcestershire, who died in 1774, and no less than 24 persons are known to have resided in England during the last century who ranged through various ages from 104 to 123. William Walker served as a private soldier at the battle of Edgehill when in his 112th year; Sergeant Donald McLean, a soldier from boyhood, came to America in his 103rd year to serve under Sir Henry Clinton in the war against the Colonies; he was, however, sent back as a bearer of despatches, and with a handsome pension provided by this officer from his own income. Lord Bacon says that in the year of our Lord 76 there was a taxing of the people by Vespasian; and it appears that in one part of Italy, there were found 54 persons, 100 years old—57, 110 years—2, 120 years—4, 130 years—4, 135 years—3, 140 years each. In Norway in 1763, it was discovered that 150 couples had been married and lived together over 80 years—so that our golden wedding celebrations are not such wonderful events after all. Seventy couples had been married over 90 years, which would fix their ages at about 110. Twelve couples had been married from 100 to 105 years—and another couple had lived together 110; and their ages doubtless were 130 years.

The following cases may be cited as curiosities: Mary Burke, aged 105, living in Drury Lane, London, and Anne Brestow, aged 102, living in Culbeck, in the North of England, died in 1789. A great contrast is here shown, for both attained great age, but one lived in squalid poverty in one of the vilest haunts of London, while the other belonged to the Society of Friends, and abode in the healthy region of the Cumberland Lakes. The truth is that no law of sickness is so very distinctly pronounced as to justify any discrimination on the ground of sojourning in city, town, or country.

Six persons are known to have completed 140 years of life during the eighteenth century, viz:—Damitur Radulay, of Transylvania; M. Laurence, of Oreades, Scotland; a French gentleman of foreign extraction named Goldsmith; M. Gulstone, an Irish magistrate; and James Sands, of Staffordshire, whose wife lived to be 120. Margaret Patten, of Lochneuk, near Paisley, lived 138. John Mount, another Scott, was but two years her junior at the time of his death, which occurred in 1766, while Margaret Foster of the same age, along with a daughter of 104, were living in Cumberland in 1771, and for all evidence we have, may have had their lives prolonged some years thereafter. Richard Lloyd, of Montgomery, was 133; John Brookey, of Devonshire, his junior by a year; Mary Yates, of Shropshire, died aged 128 in the year of American Independence;

William Elles, of Liverpool, two years older, followed three years later; Margaret Krasiawna, a Polish woman, died in 1763, aged 108. When 94 she married for her third husband Gaspard Raykott, who was then 105. His father had previously died at the age of 119.

However frail the thread which holds life in the body, which the merest accident may sever—as for instance, we lost one of our learned Judges a few years ago through the rupture of a small artery connected with one of the valves of the heart, and in an instant of time, as it were, he ceased to exist. However frail, I repeat, is this thread of life, there is on the other hand a tenacity which baffles the understanding, equally marvellous. One of the most remarkable instances of the stubborn fight between old age and death is found in John Tice—who died in 1774, aged 125 years. While he was felling a tree, at the age of 80, his legs were broken, but he speedily recovered, and at the age of 110 fell in a fainting fit upon some live coals and was shockingly burned. He survived this scorching and retained the free use of all his faculties till his death, which took place on his hearing of the loss of a friend and patron. Thus the mental strain upon him was far greater than the physical. As an offset to this. One of our prominent and worthy Citizens was cut off a few years since, the result of an accidental fall. He had nearly touched his 80th year, when one morning on going to the front door his foot slipped, and in falling broke several ribs—from the effects of which he shortly afterwards died. Whereas up to the moment of the accident he was as active on foot and in his mental faculties as a man at 50, and bade fair to live to 100.

Dr. Van Oven, an authority of great ability, has given seventeen examples of age exceeding 150 years. Indeed it is contended by Haller that the vital forces of man are capable of reaching in some cases 200 years. As this idea however appears to be more speculative than susceptible of proof, it need not be here dwelt upon. We frequently read in patent medicine advertisements the old age of Thomas Parr, who died at 152. But he was a young man compared with the age of Thomas Cam, who died at Shore-ditch, St. Leonard's, January 28, 1588, at the age of 207. Henry Jenkins died at the age of 169. Peter Garten, the Hungarian peasant, lived to be 185. Louisa Truxo, at the age of 175, was living in Cordova, in South America, in 1780.

In Fuller's "Book of Worthies," James Sands, of Staffordshire, is mentioned as having lived 140 years, and his wife 120 years. As a very convincing proof of the above, it was stated in Court that he outlived five leases of twenty one years each, made to him after his marriage. Thomas Gangheen died in 1814, aged 112. He was called at the age of 108 to prove the validity of a survey made in the year 1725, and his testimony contributed chiefly to the termination of an important lawsuit. Jane Forrester died 1766, aged 138. When she was 132 years of age her intellect was so clear that she made oath in a Chancery suit to have known an estate, the title to which was then in dispute, to have been enjoyed by the ancestors of the present heir one hundred and one years. Peter Garden died near Edinburgh in 1775, aged 131 years. He lived during eight reigns. He was of gigantic stature, and retained his health and entire faculties to the last hour.

For the consideration of two very worthy classes, it is said that there is rarely an instance of a bachelor or spinster having attained great age—whereas married persons make better interest with life insurance offices. Why or wherefore these differences, I am not prepared to say.

We receive a new and touching view of the solemn vow taken at marriage, "I promise to love, cherish, protect, &c., until death us do part," in the case of John Revin and his wife, who died at Temeswar, Hungary, in 1741, he aged 172, and she 164. They lived as husband and wife during the long period of 148 years, and their youngest son at the

time of their decease was aged 116. There was no divorce court required in this case. Matches made for a few years and then broken through the Law Courts are comparatively modern innovations, and peculiar specially to some countries,—of human not divine origin,—in their distinguishing features.

Longevity seems to run in families, and it sometimes appears to be hereditary, as in other respects. You seldom find the children of confirmed drunkards without the manifestation of some taint in the blood and disposition. Imbecility, sometimes insanity, a craving for stimulants, in the excessive use of tobacco, or some narcotic, irritability of temper, a restless craving nature, always in a state of excitement, querulous, loquacious sometimes criminal in act, if not in intention—and yet unlike the parent not addicted to strong drink. And so in other hereditary cases. The son of a quarrelsome cantankerous father will not always have a very amiable disposition. Consumption we all know runs through families. The elixir of life is also a reasonable inheritance. A sound healthy constitution in a strong body, unruffled by the carking cares and accidents of life, will find congenial soil in successive generations. Cases may be cited, but they present themselves on all sides, where individual members of families have been remarkable for their old age.

It is remarked that centenarians are apt to be small of stature. Large men and women are more liable to the accidents of life, and their organizations are less likely to be compactly knit. Dwarfs have frequently passed the five score years, and among others may be mentioned one Elspeth Watson, who died aged one hundred and fifteen. She was two feet nine inches high and rather bulky, if one of that stature can be called bulky. Mr. Robertson, of Edinburgh, died in 1794, aged 137 years. He served a noble family in the capacity of inspector of lead works for 120 years. Margaret Woods died in 1797, aged 100. She and her ancestors had lived in the service of one family in Essex during the long period of 460 years.

There are many recorded instances of longevity among the classic Greeks and Romans. Cicero's wife lived to the age of 103, and the Roman actress Luceja played in public as late as her 112th year. The notable great age of Henry Jenkins, of Yorkshire, England, before referred to, who died in 1670, 163 years old, was a fisherman, and at the age of 100, easily swam across rapid rivers. Thomas Parr, of Shropshire, a day laborer, lived to the age of 152 years. When more than 120 he married his second wife, and till 130, it is said, he could swing the scythe and wield the flail with the best of his fellow laborers. In his 152nd year Parr went up to London to exhibit himself to the king. It proved a fatal visit, for, violating the abstemious habit of a century and a half, the old man feasted so freely on the royal victuals, that he soon died, merely of plethora. On examination his internal organs proved to be in excellent condition, and there was no reason why he should not have lived much longer, save for this taste of royal hospitality.

James Hatfield died in 1770 at the age of 105. One night on duty as a sentinel at Windsor, he heard St. Paul's clock in London, 23 miles distant, strike 13 instead of 12; not being relieved as he expected, he fell asleep. The tardy relief soon arrived and found him in this condition. He was tried by court-martial; he denied the charge of sleeping at his post before midnight, for he had heard the clock strike 13, and did not fall asleep until after 12, when his time was up. This statement was corroborated by several persons in London, who had counted the 13 strokes likewise, and Hatfield's life was saved. During the last century a Frenchman at the age of 21, was sentenced to the galleys of Toulon for the term of his natural life. By the French laws this term is considered to have expired after one hundred years have elapsed. Having served that period, our venerable prisoner of State at the age of 122 was released and went back to

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his native village; but of course, like Rip Van Winkle, he was unknown. Yet he had triumphed over law, bondage, man, time, everything. He returned heart-broken to his galley and died.

Returning to the home of one's youth after an absence of many years, how natural it is to feel alone and lonely even amidst the crowded streets. Old friends have all departed, either buried beneath the sod or left for parts unknown. Youth has grown into manhood, and middle into old age, none being recognizable. The associations and recollections of your school-boy days afford melancholy food for reflection. And so you wish to depart from the home of your birth, and mingle once more with the friends and acquaintances of your latter years, which after all, is the most comforting cause of home, for you can only be at home among friends. One can very well make allowance then for the feelings of the prisoner of Toulon, on returning to the world after nearly 100 years, to find not a living soul he once knew.

Let us now turn our attention to the old people of the present day, embracing a period within the last fifty years. Although we may not be able to cite as many instances of longevity during our time, as has been done in the past and previous centuries—it may be that history has not as yet taken cognizance—we are informed that individual life is continually lengthening. From 1838 to 1854, according to carefully compiled statistics, the average length of woman's life was 41.9, and of man's 39.9 years in the British Islands. Now the averages are respectively 45.3 and 41.9. This improvement is due to the greater attention paid to health and scientific sanitation.

There is, therefore, some comfort in this, when the average duration of life tells such a good story. But, in the course of my researches in various nooks and corners, I discover that even in our day we have exceptional cases of longevity. It is said that there is (or was a year or two ago) a man living in Bogota named Miguel Solis, whose age or time of birth is not given, but Dr. Louis Hernandez writes that his name appears on a list of subscribers to the Franciscan Convent of San Sebastian in 1712, so that he must be not far from 170 years of age. His hair is perfectly white and plentiful, his skin like parchment, and he is still able to work. His eyes are bright and his conversation distinct. In accounting for his longevity he says: "I have never, to my recollection, eaten more than once a day; on the 1st and 15th of each month I fast rigorously from all food, but drink a great quantity of water. I always eat my food cold. I have never committed the least excess in drinking."

Pompey Graham of Montgomery, N. Y., died on the 27th August last, aged 119 years. He had a distinct recollection of incidents and personages of his youth, but could not remember dates. He said he was a big boy when the Revolutionary War was declared. He remembered when Clinton was elected first Governor of New York. He left Shawangunk, in Ulster County, where he was born, in 1807, and he was then 42 years old. He was an old man, over 60, when slavery was abolished in New York. He had his second wife long before Washington's death, and afterwards married a third. He was the oldest of seventeen children, and enjoyed good health up to the time of his death.

I make the following clippings from newspapers:

Mrs. Jane Ryder of Orrington, Me., was 103 years old in January, and is yet able to help herself.

Mrs. Magdalena Boggs of Milton, Ind., is nearly 104 years old, in fair health, but weak in memory.

Uncle Billy Whitney of Norwood, N. C., is 112 years old. He has cut a third set of teeth. He married at 33, and when his wife died she was 101 years old.

Mrs. Douglas of Omaha, Neb., has just celebrated her centennial birthday. She is well preserved and has an excellent memory, but her eyesight is failing.

When Mrs. Betty Averill of New Preston, Conn., celebrated her 100th birthday, the children of the town gave her a set of books, and fifty of her family and descendants dined with her.

Betsey Sargeant of Canterbury, N. H., has enjoyed 100 years of single-blessedness, and is not yet ready to marry. Her mind is vigorous, and she still attends to her household duties daily.

Mrs. Outhet, a native of Cornwallis, died at Melvern Square, N. S., a few weeks ago. She was in her 101st year.

Old man Webster, who is 104 years of age, and lives near Shediak, on the road to Point du Chene, was able to cut his hay and do other work during the past season.

Six years ago there resided in the vicinity of Bridgetown, N. S., some of whom may have since died, the following persons:

Mrs. James Taylor of Cornwallis, aged 98; Mr. Benjamin Foster of Berwick, 97; Mr. Samuel Foster, of Hampton, 95; Mrs. Frank Tupper of Cornwallis, 93; Mr. Philip Foster of Cornwallis, 77. The grandmother of the above died at the age of 105 years.

There resided in the Parish of Botsford, Westmorland, in this Province, at one time not long since:

Mrs. Commo, aged 102 years; Adam Ames, 90; B. Henesy, 90; Adam Scott, 89; Mrs. Adam Scott, 87; Mrs. G. Dobson, 86; Stephen Trenholm, 86; Arch Boyce, 86; William Wells, 85.

Marang Girouard of Ken. County, is hale and hearty at 92. He works like a man of 60; and my informant says, "he seems as likely to live 20 years longer as 20 days."

There were living in St. Andrews in 1879 (says the *Bay Pilot*), 23 persons of the following ages: 4 at 80; 4 at 81; 2 at 82; 1 at 83; 2 at 84; 2 at 85; 3 at 86; 2 at 87; 1 at 88; 1 at 91; 1 at 92.

In 1884 we had in our Fredericton Almshouse 12 persons residing of the following ages: 1 at 70; 3 at 72; 1 at 74; 1 at 77; 1 at 79; 1 at 80; 1 at 84; 1 at 92; 1 at 96. So that old age and poverty may go hand in hand, as well as among the more favored classes.

British Statesmen have been remarkable for the attainment of old age. Palmerston, Russel, Gray, Chatham, Brougham, and a score of others, were all to the front after passing their 80th birthday. Disraeli and Gladstone, although active up to the last moment, carrying the cares of State upon their minds, are not counted in this connection; although Gladstone at 77 is a wonderful exhibition of intellectual power unsubdued by physical infirmities. The Emperor William of Germany is another remarkable instance of life's tenacity, who at the age of 90, is still active. Von Molke is fit for service at 83, as Wellington was at the same age. Chief Justice Halliburton of Nova Scotia attained his 87th year, as also did Chief Justice Young, who passed away only a year since. The name of another distinguished Haligonian may be mentioned in this connection, viz.: the Admiral of the British Navy—Vice-Admiral Sir Provost Wallace—who still lives at 96 years. I last saw him fifty years ago. He was then Captain of the *Menæ* frigate on the North American Station—every inch a sailor and gentleman in appearance. At the age of 22 he was Lieutenant on board the *Shannon* in her engagement with the American ship *Chesapeake*, and the duty devolved upon him to take command and convey the prize into Halifax—all the other officers being killed or disabled. This old hero still lives and was in good health at last accounts. Chief Justice Blowers of Nova Scotia lived to the age of 100. Ex-Governor Desbarres of P. E. Island died in Halifax many years ago, at the age of 102. I saw both their funerals. Colonel Minchin, who lived and passed away in Fredericton a few years since, was 100 years of age. A St. John paper a short time since, interviewed a gentleman named Moore, aged 100.

These cases come into my mind at the moment *en passant*. One or two examples of longevity peculiar to families, may be here given. Mr. Keithe, of Gloucestershire, England, died in 1772 aged 133 years. He left three daughters—the eldest aged 111—the second 110, and the youngest 109. Major Ward, of Saint John, called the father of the City, died about forty years ago at the age of 94. Two of his sons, Charles and John, lived to the age of 93 respectively. Other instances might be cited. But a whole volume could be written in the enumeration of such cases and the curiosities of longevity generally—a work of interest to young as well as old. But the scope of a paper like this forbids anything more than a casual reference.

The secret of longevity belongs as yet to the Greek Kalends,—for we do not discover in all cases of old age, that the rules of living have been uniformly of the same observance. Some have grown old not only in spite of the reverses of fortune, but in defiance of all organic, hygienic, or sanitary rule or regulation; gluttony as well as drunkenness has run into the octogenarian period of existence. But such cases are the exception to the rule. It is unnatural to believe that, ordinarily speaking, a man can attain old age who lives an intemperate life—the word “intemperate” to be taken in its various forms,—as well in other respects as in the use of intoxicating liquors; for however injurious to the human system the latter no doubt is, especially when carried to excess, there is another habit, if not equally demoralizing, is nevertheless in my opinion almost as destructive to human life,—I mean the use and abuse of tobacco. When I say almost as destructive, I hope I shall not be misunderstood. My reference is to the percentage of deaths caused by the use of the two articles respectively. I believe that for every one man who drinks liquor, two use tobacco without drinking; and as the latter is in my opinion a slow poison, undermining the system, deranging the nerves and destroying the action of the heart; although the process of decay is slow and imperceptible, it is nevertheless going on all the same. The vital forces are being used up from day to day. The respectability of the habit (I know no other word to use here), is rather an encouragement to it—whereas if Society would combine and frown it down, as in the case of the Temperance organizations—tobacco like rum would be consigned to the tomb of the Capulets, and the smoking of an old pipe in our streets would in time come to be regarded as one of the lost arts which went out with the last of the Indians. However, this is a subject to which a whole lecture might be devoted—and perhaps upon this head I have said too much already. Again, no man can expect to grow old, or raise a healthy family, if he resides over a cess-pool, and thus continually breathe foul air,—if his premises are filled with garbage, and his neighborhood hot-beds of putrefaction, decay, and choked drainage. This remark applies to country as well as town. Our Boards of Health of late years have done much good in looking after these things. But they cannot do everything. They may fine a man for violating a sanitary law, but they cannot compel him to be tidy, especially in localities where no Boards exist. Bad plumbing in houses is another great cause of disease. Better in my opinion to dispense altogether with the modern conveniences so dependent upon plumbing, than run any risks, unless you can depend upon the honesty of your workman. But in order to the enjoyment of health and the attainment of old age, there are many other things to be avoided and studied. Regular hours in eating and sleeping are to be observed. The rigidity, however, which would consign a person to bed at ten at night, and up again at six in the morning,—that would regulate the exact quantity of food to be taken at a meal (provided nothing is eaten that disagrees with one), has no place in my vocabulary. I believe in freedom of action in these as in other respects, it moderated upon well-defined rules. Discretion and good judgment should govern every action of our lives, and leave the rest to the laws of our nature. A late writer says:

He who strives after a long and pleasant term of life must seek to attain continual equanimity, and carefully to avoid everything which too violently taxes his feelings. Nothing more quickly consumes the vigor of life than the violence of the emotions of the mind. We know that anxiety and care can destroy the healthiest body ; we know that fright and fear, yes, excess of joy, becomes deadly. Those who are naturally cool and of a quiet turn of mind, upon whom nothing can make too powerful an impression, who are not wont to be excited either by great sorrow or great joy, have the best chance of living long and happy after their manner. Preserve, therefore, under all circumstances, a composure of mind which no happiness, no misfortune can too much disturb. Love nothing too violently ; hate nothing too passionately ; fear nothing too strongly.

CHOLERA IN SAINT JOHN IN 1854.

I just now remarked that filth and bad drainage were pregnant causes of disease. In 1854, when the cholera broke out in Saint John, this City was in a most foul state, and had no proper water supply. No wonder the disease found congenial food here for the destruction of life. Although what I am about to relate may appear irrelevant to the occasion, it may not be without interest to the younger members of the audience, and serve as a caution to the citizens in case of another cholera visitation, which God forbid. It is now thirty three years since that terrible scourge, when 1500 of the people of this City and Portland were carried off in about eight weeks. As an epidemic, the disease first exhibited itself (at the beginning of July) in the neighborhood of the "Bethel Meeting House," foot of Morris street, where a woman and three of her children died within the space of forty eight hours ; and after carrying off many others, it *established* itself in St. Patrick's Street, taking a bound, as it were, over half a mile of ground. In this locality of slaughter houses and other abominations, the scourge was terrible ; and it held on while there was a victim left, it would seem, to satiate its appetite. Those who did not die fled, so that the entire street was all but deserted. It next took possession of York Point, and the neighborhood of the Mill Pond—likewise filthy disgusting places—where hundreds fell beneath the fetid breath of the destroyer. Portland was visited next, and in the main and bye-streets of this Parish, there were not a dozen houses out of four hundred that were not attacked. It then reached Indian Town, where the havoc was more manifest than perhaps in any other part, from the fact of the place being more compactly built. At one time, it was said, there were not a dozen persons, out of a population of 300, remaining, owing to the deaths and desertions. After destroying and dispersing all before it in Indian Town, the epidemic made its way into Lower Cove, and extended its arms right and left, in nearly every street.

Although these localities were the strong battle grounds of the disease, it manifested itself in a sporadic form in all parts of the City and suburbs—the air seemed impregnated, it had an unusual, sulphurous smell—nor was the fog any panacea ; on the contrary, when the fog was the heaviest the disease seemed to increase. Upwards of 43 bodies were conveyed over the Abideau Bridge one day, when the fog was so dense that an object fifty yards ahead could not be discerned. The disease performed a circuit, confining itself chiefly to the low lands, while the higher ground—or centre of the City—being better situated for natural drainage, was lightly passed over. More than one half the deaths were put down to predisposing causes—such as physical debility, inattention to regimen, poverty, ignorance, fright, and so forth. But every one healthy and vigorous felt that the last day was at hand for him, except perhaps the hard drinker ; during that year no licenses for selling liquor were granted by the Mayor, and there never was so much drunkenness shown in the streets, in the midst of this harvest of death. The

roughs and drunkards lost their heads and fell easy victims to the cholera. No class of men were more zealous or worked harder to mitigate suffering and minister to the wants of their fellow-beings than the Doctors and the Ministers. They were in the midst of the disease day and night; and although some of them were debilitated and worn out from exposure, it was set down as a most remarkable thing, that not one suffered or died from the disease. Heroic instances might be cited of deeds performed; but where all did so, it may appear like invidiousness to particularize. One case might be mentioned of a reverend gentleman, who spent his days in the Protestant graveyards performing the burial service over the dead, as bodies would arrive one after another, rather than see them buried without such ministrations. On riding one morning to the church-yard, head of the Bay, he saw a number of persons crowding together over some object. On coming up he found a boy writhing in agony, a victim of the cholera. He lifted him into his carriage, conveyed him to the Almshouse, and that boy grew up into manhood to relate the circumstance. That Clergyman's name was Rev. Wm. Scovill, who died in England a couple of years since. The orphans were so numerous that it was almost impossible to find them shelter. The Roman Catholic Bishop (Connolly), likewise dead, improvised buildings which afforded temporary quarters for a large number. Heads of families were cut down, leaving in some cases eight and ten helpless children, and starvation for want of care, was in some instances the result. The Almshouse was filled with children, the offspring of well to-do and poor alike. In twelve days there were 48 cases of cholera in this Institution alone, and 26 deaths. The shipyards at Courtenay Bay and the Straight Shore were deserted. There were upwards of twenty large ships on the stocks at the time, and almost 2,000 men employed. But now every yard was as silent as a graveyard.

The progress of the disease from day to day will be better understood by the sub-joined figures: The object was to keep the existence of the cholera as secret as possible—and no bulletins were issued for some days, until the necessity for doing so was forced upon the Board of Health, at that time not a very vigilant body. July 26th there were 10 deaths. For the 24 hours ending July 29th, 33—including St. John and Portland. Next 24 hours—30. Next—31. Next—27. Next—24. Ending August 1—27. Next, August 4—41, and for the week ending the latter date—221. Next 24 hours, August 11—40. Next—42. Next—37, and for each day afterwards—33—33—21—18—20—25—14—18—17—15—13. And August 21 the decline is very marked, viz., 7—then 10—and last bulletin—3, at the end of September. I have omitted some days in the statement, but that is not material. There were probably 5,000 cholera cases and 1,500 deaths during the terrible two months' visitation.

A person named Munford, who was sexton in the Germain street Methodist Church, was engaged by the Board of Health to attend to the sick and dead. If there was a hero, that person was one in the true acceptation of the word. He was at work everywhere, day and night. Death had no terrors for him. Rough wooden coffins were going about the streets by cart loads; and Munford often unassisted would place the dead in coffins and have them carried away for burial. Persons in a dying state deserted by friends in sheer terror, had in Munford a ministering angel, doing what he could to afford relief. The Victoria Cross, then not instituted, has never been bestowed upon a more worthy hero. He worked and lived through the whole plague, and came out more than conqueror. Every house was provided with cholera medicine, and disinfectants were used in almost every room. The vapours from chloride of lime went up like incense pouring out of the windows like smoke, and scenting the air in all the neighborhood. House to house visitation by physicians, was a means used to find out the sick when in the incipient stages of the disease and provide remedies. The plan was considered most

valuable, and was no doubt the means of saving many lives, especially among the poor and destitute. Finally tar barrels and various combustible compounds were set on fire in the streets, so that the whole town was a glare of light at night since. This proceeding was considered to be highly efficacious. The air was full of smoke and tar fumes, which perhaps destroyed the miasmatic germs, and went far towards bringing the plague plague to a close.

I thus described on the 21st August, 1854, the desolation of the scene that everywhere presented itself, and it may not be out of place if I here read it:

"We passed through Portland on Friday afternoon. O what a change was there presented since our previous visit! It was a scene of desolation and church yard stillness; the houses with their closed shutters and white blinded windows, serving as monuments to remind us that the angel of death had passed with destructive rapidity through the tenements of this broad avenue. Scarcely a human soul was to be seen in the street. A field-piece might have been placed in any situation and discharged; and the chance of hitting any person would have been very remote. It was Portland at 12 o'clock at night, and yet the sun was in his meridian! The gutters were strewn with lime, in a yellowish state, showing the preparations that had been made for the terrible scourge. In these houses death had been busy for the past six weeks,—hundreds of human beings who inhabited them, in whose veins just now beat the pulsations of life and happiness, are now in eternity. * * * From the Portland (Rev. Mr. Harrison's) Church out to the Valley Church, through Paradise Row—a distance of about a mile and a half—where thousands of people and vehicles of all kinds are usually to be seen, it being one of the greatest business thoroughfares in the whole Province—we counted (at 4 o'clock in the afternoon) six human beings, and not a single vehicle. Out of about two hundred shops, there were not more than ten that were not closed. As a universal thing we may add, the white blinds were drawn at all the upper windows. It appeared to us as if these who had survived had deserted their houses and gone into the country—anywhere to get clear of the fatal destroyer. But a person must go through Portland to judge for himself. It was a most painful and soul-stirring visit, that of ours on Friday afternoon."

Public meetings were called, and steps taken to guard against future visitations. A Committee was appointed for the relief of the destitute, composed of the following citizens: James A. Harding, Chairman; Rev. William Scovil, Rev. William Donald, Rev. George Armstrong, Rev. Wm. Ferrie, James Macfarlane, John Boyd, W. D. W. Hubbard, Chas. P. Betts, James McMillan, to whom contributions were to be sent. The destitution was terrible, especially among the poor; for during the eight weeks of the plague there was no business done, no employment, and consequently no money and but little food.

Although the cholera is again on the advance (it has found a lodgment in New York), and as in 1854 may diffuse itself far and wide, I do not think it possible, even if it gets to St John, that it can work such destruction as on the former occasion. Our City in a sanitary point of view was then greatly neglected. We counted too much upon the fog as an epidemic preventive, and therefore took no precaution against an attack. The Mill Pond was a receptacle for the dumpage of all sorts of abominations. Erin street was a large dish which received the flowage of all the high lands round about, and an unsavoury odor pervaded the atmosphere all the year round. All the Back Bay was occupied by slaughter houses in a reeking state of decay and putrefaction. We had no sewers worthy of the name. Stagnation in these respects was the rule. We had no regular water supply. The works were in the hands of a Company, and the pipes run only through certain streets, while the supply even from these was intermittent and uncertain. The Board of Health was not a live body as it is to-day. The necessity for undue exertion in 1854 may not have been considered essential.

Now all this is changed. The Mill Pond has been filled up, and fine railway structures occupy the site. Erin street, York Point, and all adjacent streets have undergone a transformation which represents altogether a totally opposite condition of things. Instead of stagnant sewers, the whole city is well drained. The slaughter houses, once so noxious in the back part of the city, have been banished into the suburbs, and are now conducted under proper rules and regulations. The city owns the water works which are well managed, and the supply is generally satisfactory. The Board of Health is alive and active. In short, the sanitary condition of St. John and Portland to-day is pure and healthful; and the great fire of 1877, by which a large amount of animal and vegetable life was destroyed, may have contributed somewhat to this better condition of things. I do not mean to say that everything is in perfect order, and there is no room for improvement still. No precautionary measures to ward off the cholera should be neglected, whether by Boards of Health or people.

After this long digression I will now draw the subject of this lecture to a close.

In conclusion. Is it within our power to extend our lives beyond the ordinary period? By the observance of certain rules we may. The besetting sins of our nature, selfishness and self-indulgence, when properly disciplined or rationally controlled, will not continue as stumbling blocks in the pathway to old age. Sickly, delicate persons have been known to advance in years, and towards the decline of life become vigorous and hearty, even at 70 and 80. The thin, spare body may be healthy. The spare, pale man, though a weak man, may live on, because he lives out and out in every part equally. All his vital organs live and die together, not one of them dying first and bringing the others down with it. So he lives, as it is commonly said, on a thread; but a thread which, being continuous and of equal strength, neither knotted nor uneven, is durable and long-lived. And on the other hand, there are those who have boasted that they never had a day's sickness, or once required a physician's aid in all their lives; and yet while in the meridian of their days have been suddenly cut down. Then there are those who appear ruddy, sound, robust, the picture of health as it is called, who bid fair to reach the centenarian period. But there is an enemy within, lurking about the corners of the body, who must be watched and kept in check by the observance of regular habits. The hearts of such persons are too powerful or too feeble for the rest of the organism; or the vascular system of their brain is feeble at some point; or the kidney, the brain, the liver or the lung is undergoing structural change, and under sudden strain is easily stricken with a fatal inactivity which carries all the other vital organs in its own train. The secret is—poor health demands and gets more care; while robust health, equally amenable to the same physical laws, takes no thought of man's mortality, but moves upon the crest of the volcano without considering the insecurity of the foot-hold. Nor is life to be measured by rules so exact, that the least deviation from the strict line is sure to bring about disaster. That in order to enjoy health we must weigh our food, submit it to a chemical analysis, set bounds to our cups. That we must go to bed early and rise early—(some philosophers go so far as to say, that the earlier you rise the longer you will live—to which opinion they are welcome). That you must not go out in wet weather lest you get your feet wet, and take cold. That you must not keep yourself too hot or too cold. In fact, that in order to attain old age you must shut yourself up in prison, and have a keeper over you to wind you up every morning and see that you keep good time during every moment of the day. Now in my opinion all these precautions, however good, are rather strained and arbitrary. I believe that a man should eat and drink as much as suits his bodily condition, and that he should regulate his sleeping hours by the demands of his nature and his opportunities; but always to

have sleep enough, whatever the hours, and that he is not infringing upon the laws of his being, should be continue in bed until nine o'clock in the morning. That the temperature of his body and of the atmosphere which he breathes, should be made to harmonize as nearly as possible, and that if he goes abroad and gets his feet wet no harm will befall him, provided he looks after himself as soon as he gets under cover. In short, in order to longevity we must lead regular, temperate, well-spent lives, take plenty of out-door exercise, walk half a dozen miles a day, avoid all excesses, keep good hours, control our passions as well as appetites, owe no man anything but kind words, never get excited, go to bed and get up with a clear conscience, live at peace with all the world—especially your friends and your neighbours. Above all, remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth and throughout life—"in whose hands our breath is, and whose are all our ways."



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